

**Bari Weiss**[Follow @bariweiss](#)

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THREAD: THE TWITTER FILES PART TWO.

TWITTER'S SECRET BLACKLISTS.

1. A new [#TwitterFiles](#) investigation reveals that teams of Twitter employees build blacklists, prevent disfavored tweets from trending, and actively limit the visibility of entire accounts or even trending topics—all in secret, without informing users.
2. Twitter once had a mission “to give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers.” Along the way, barriers nevertheless were erected.
3. Take, for example, Stanford’s Dr. Jay Bhattacharya ([@DrJBhattacharya](#)) who argued that Covid lockdowns would harm children. Twitter secretly placed him on a “Trends Blacklist,” which prevented his tweets from trending.
4. Or consider the popular right-wing talk show host, Dan Bongino ([@dbongino](#)), who at one point was slapped with a “Search Blacklist.”
5. Twitter set the account of conservative activist Charlie Kirk ([@charliekirk11](#)) to “Do Not Amplify.”
6. Twitter denied that it does such things. In 2018, Twitter's Vijaya Gadde (then Head of Legal Policy and Trust) and Kayvon Beykpour (Head of Product) said: “We do not shadow ban.” They added: “And we certainly don’t shadow ban based on political viewpoints or ideology.”
7. What many people call “shadow banning,” Twitter executives and employees call “Visibility Filtering” or “VF.” Multiple high-level sources confirmed its meaning.
8. “Think about visibility filtering as being a way for us to suppress what people see to different levels. It’s a very powerful tool,” one senior Twitter employee told us.
9. “VF” refers to Twitter’s control over user visibility. It used VF to block searches of individual users; to limit the scope of a particular tweet’s discoverability; to block select users’ posts from ever appearing on the “trending” page; and from inclusion in hashtag searches.
10. All without users’ knowledge.
11. “We control visibility quite a bit. And we control the amplification of your content quite a bit. And normal people do not know how much we do,” one Twitter engineer told us. Two additional Twitter employees confirmed.
12. The group that decided whether to limit the reach of certain users was the Strategic Response Team - Global Escalation Team, or SRT-GET. It often handled up to 200 "cases" a day.

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13. But there existed a level beyond official ticketing, beyond the rank-and-file moderators following the company's policy on paper. That is the "Site Integrity Policy, Policy Escalation Support," known as "SIP-PES."
14. This secret group included Head of Legal, Policy, and Trust (Vijaya Gadde), the Global Head of Trust & Safety (Yoel Roth), subsequent CEOs Jack Dorsey and Parag Agrawal, and others.
15. This is where the biggest, most politically sensitive decisions got made. "Think high follower account, controversial," another Twitter employee told us. For these "there would be no ticket or anything."
16. One of the accounts that rose to this level of scrutiny was [@libsoftiktok](#)—an account that was on the "Trends Blacklist" and was designated as "Do Not Take Action on User Without Consulting With SIP-PES."
17. The account—which Chaya Raichik began in November 2020 and now boasts over 1.4 million followers—was subjected to six suspensions in 2022 alone, Raichik says. Each time, Raichik was blocked from posting for as long as a week.
18. Twitter repeatedly informed Raichik that she had been suspended for violating Twitter's policy against "hateful conduct."
19. But in an internal SIP-PES memo from October 2022, after her seventh suspension, the committee acknowledged that "LTT has not directly engaged in behavior violative of the Hateful Conduct policy." See here:
20. The committee justified her suspensions internally by claiming her posts encouraged online harassment of "hospitals and medical providers" by insinuating "that gender-affirming healthcare is equivalent to child abuse or grooming."
21. Compare this to what happened when Raichik herself was doxxed on November 21, 2022. A photo of her home with her address was posted in a tweet that has garnered more than 10,000 likes.
22. When Raichik told Twitter that her address had been disseminated she says Twitter Support responded with this message: "We reviewed the reported content, and didn't find it to be in violation of the Twitter rules." No action was taken. The doxxing tweet is still up.
23. In internal Slack messages, Twitter employees spoke of using technicalities to restrict the visibility of tweets and subjects. Here's Yoel Roth, Twitter's then Global Head of Trust & Safety, in a direct message to a colleague in early 2021:
24. Six days later, in a direct message with an employee on the Health, Misinformation, Privacy, and Identity research team, Roth requested more research to support expanding "non-removal policy interventions like disabling engagements and deamplification/visibility filtering."
25. Roth wrote: "The hypothesis underlying much of what we've implemented is that if exposure to, e.g., misinformation directly causes harm, we should use remediations that reduce exposure, and limiting the spread/virality of content is a good way to do that."
26. He added: "We got Jack on board with implementing this for civic integrity in the near term, but we're going to need to make a more robust case to get this into our repertoire of policy remediations – especially for other policy domains."

27. There is more to come on this story, which was reported by [@AbigailShrier](#) [@ShellenbergerMD](#) [@NellieBowles](#) [@IsaacGrafstein](#) and the team The Free Press [@TheFP](#).

Keep up with this unfolding story here and at our brand new website: thefp.com.



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28. The authors have broad and expanding access to Twitter’s files. The only condition we agreed to was that the material would first be published on Twitter.

29. We're just getting started on our reporting. Documents cannot tell the whole story here. A big thank you to everyone who has spoken to us so far. If you are a current or former Twitter employee, we'd love to hear from you. Please write to: tips@thefp.com

30. Watch [@mtaibbi](#) for the next installment.


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Dec 9

1. THREAD: The Twitter Files THE REMOVAL OF DONALD TRUMP Part One: October 2020-January 6th

2. The world knows much of the story of what happened between riots at the Capitol on January 6th, and the removal of President Donald Trump from Twitter on January 8th...

3. We'll show you what hasn't been revealed: the erosion of standards within the company in months before J6, decisions by high-ranking executives to violate their own policies, and

Read 65 tweets



Michael Shellenberger
[@ShellenbergerMD](#)

Dec 10

1. TWITTER FILES, PART 4 The Removal of Donald Trump: January 7 As the pressure builds, Twitter executives build the case for a permanent ban

On Jan 7, senior Twitter execs: - create justifications to ban Trump - seek a change of policy for Trump alone, distinct from other political leaders - express no concern for the free speech or democracy implications of a ban This #TwitterFiles is reported with [@lwoodhouse](#)

Read 40 tweets




@ArchbpVigano

Dec 11

1. For two years now we have been witnessing a global coup d'état, in which a financial and ideological elite has succeeded in seizing control of part of national governments, public and private institutions, the media, the judiciary, politicians and religious leaders.

2. All of these, without distinction, have become enslaved to these new masters who ensure power, money and social affirmation to their accomplices.

Read 28 tweets



@AvidHalaby

Dec 12

The stuff uncovered in the Twitter whistleblower report is much crazier than anything in the "Twitter files" but it's much less politically/tribally salient so it got no attention. Going to do a thread on some of the craziest things, in no particular order.

Twitter didn't monitor employee computers at all, it was not uncommon for employees to install spyware on work devices

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Bari Weiss

@bariweiss

Dec 12

THREAD: THE TWITTER FILES PART FIVE. THE REMOVAL OF TRUMP FROM TWITTER.

1. On the morning of January 8, President Donald Trump, with one remaining strike before being at risk of permanent suspension from Twitter, tweets twice.

2. 6:46 am: “The 75,000,000 great American Patriots who voted for me, AMERICA FIRST, and MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN, will have a GIANT VOICE long into the

Read 47 tweets



Bari Weiss


@bariweiss

Jun 16

My friend @AbigailShrier broke open the story of medically transitioning children. She was way ahead of the curve, and for that she paid a price. People lied about her. They smeared her. Target banned her book. The ACLU's most prominent lawyer called for it to be banned.

Today in The New York Times, @emilybazelon validates the groundbreaking reporting she did for Common Sense featuring Dr. Erica Anderson and Dr. Marci Bowers, who bravely blew the whistle on 'sloppy' care.


Read 5 tweets



Bari Weiss

@bariweiss

Jun 16



Bari Weiss

@bariweiss

Jun 16

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It's been quite a weekend... Last night I was deeply honored to receive the Daniel Pearl Award from @LAPressClub and @yudapearl. This is the speech I gave: forward.com/news/israel/47...

I was thrilled, also, to finally sit down with my friend @benshapiro for his Sunday Special. Watch our conversation here:

And thank you, @brianstelter, for having me on [@brianstelter's podcast](#)

Read 4 tweets

I didn't start a newsletter to make a living publishing my columns. I started it because I want to run the best opinion page in the country, full of scoops, reporting, and fresh insight. I think we delivered on that goal for back-to-school week (Thread!): bariweiss.substack.com/p/back-to-scho...

First up was @SnoozyWeiss with a feature about the explosion in American homeschooling (some five million kids, double the number from 2019): bariweiss.substack.com/p/american-hom...

Read 7 tweets



Bari Weiss
[@bariweiss](#)

May 3, 2021

Paul Rossi is morally courageous and I'm grateful to everyone who is amplifying his voice. Thank you @wethefifth: shows.acast.com/wethefifth/epi...

Thank you, @RubinReport:

Thank you, @megynkelly: podcasts.podinstall.com/devil-may-care...

Read 4 tweets



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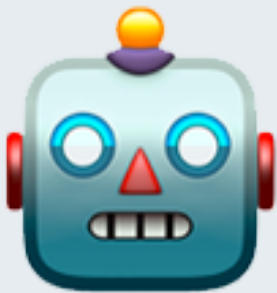
Mar 12, 2021

By now you know about Jodi Shaw (@Smith_Surge). But perhaps you have not yet heard about Gabrielle Clark and her son, William. (Thread).

William is a biracial teenager in Nevada. He lives in transitional housing with his mother, Gabrielle, who is black and disabled. William works at a local fast food restaurant to support his mother and two siblings. His father died when he was young.

[Read more about Gabrielle Clark and her son, William](#)

Read 7 tweets



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